



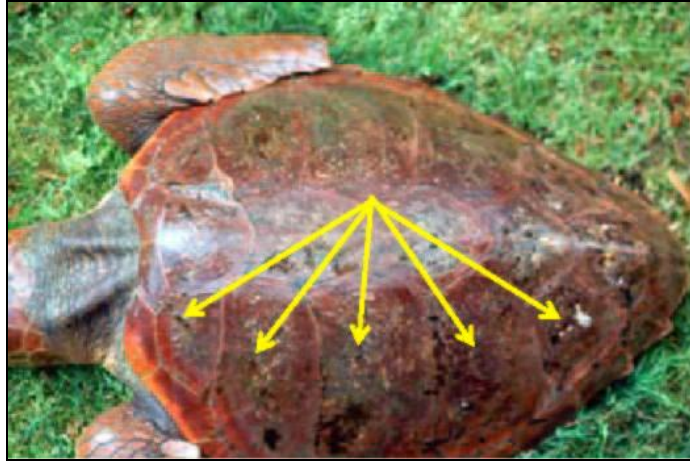
## **SC Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network Species Identification and Training Guide**

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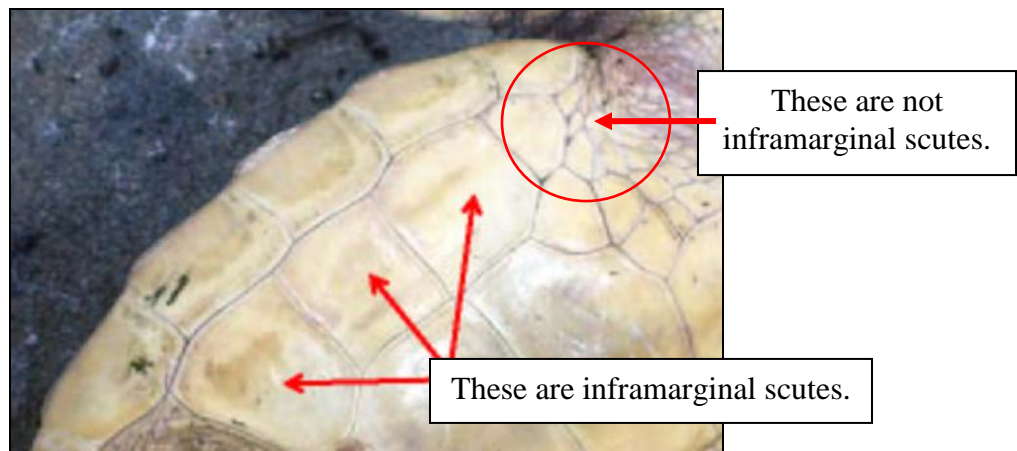
**To Report a Sea Turtle Stranding  
Call 1-800-922-5431**

## Determining the Species

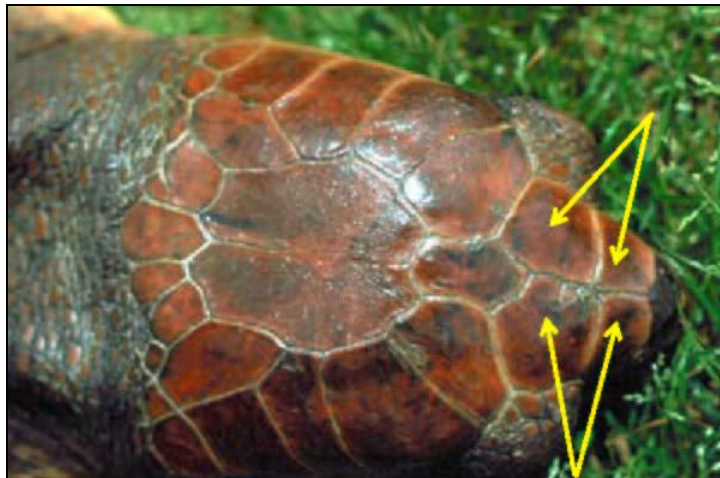
1. Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) carapace showing five lateral scutes and reddish brown color.



2. Loggerhead plastron showing three inframarginal scutes and yellow color.



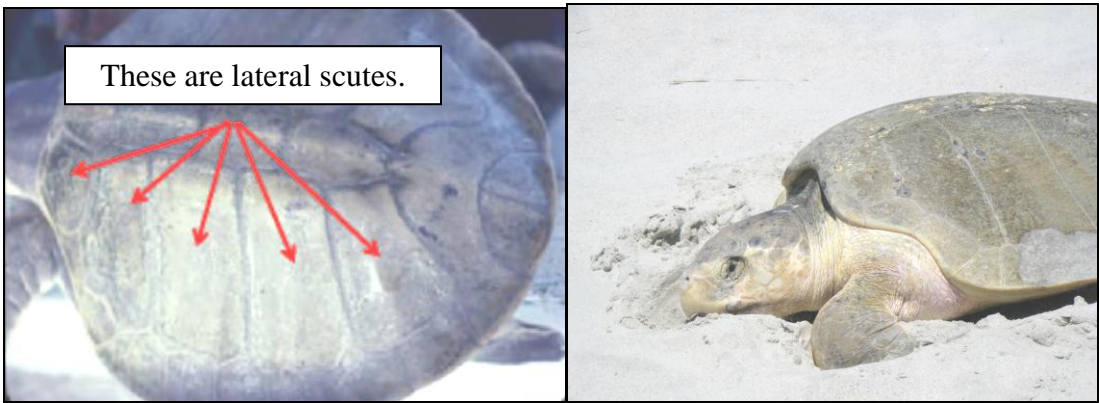
3. Loggerhead reddish brown head with more than one pair of prefrontal scales.



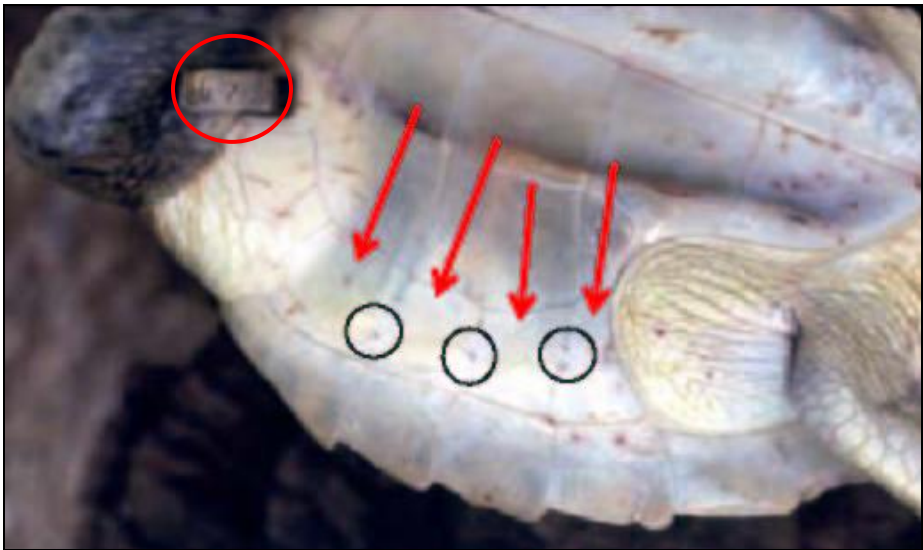
4. Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*) carapace showing dark grey color in young juveniles and round shell. Kemp's ridleys have a carapace width equal to or greater than the carapace length.



5. Juvenile Kemp's ridley carapace showing light olive green color and five lateral scutes. Shell color lightens as they mature.



6. Kemp's ridley plastron showing creamy white color and four inframarginal scutes with pores; note flipper tag inside circle.

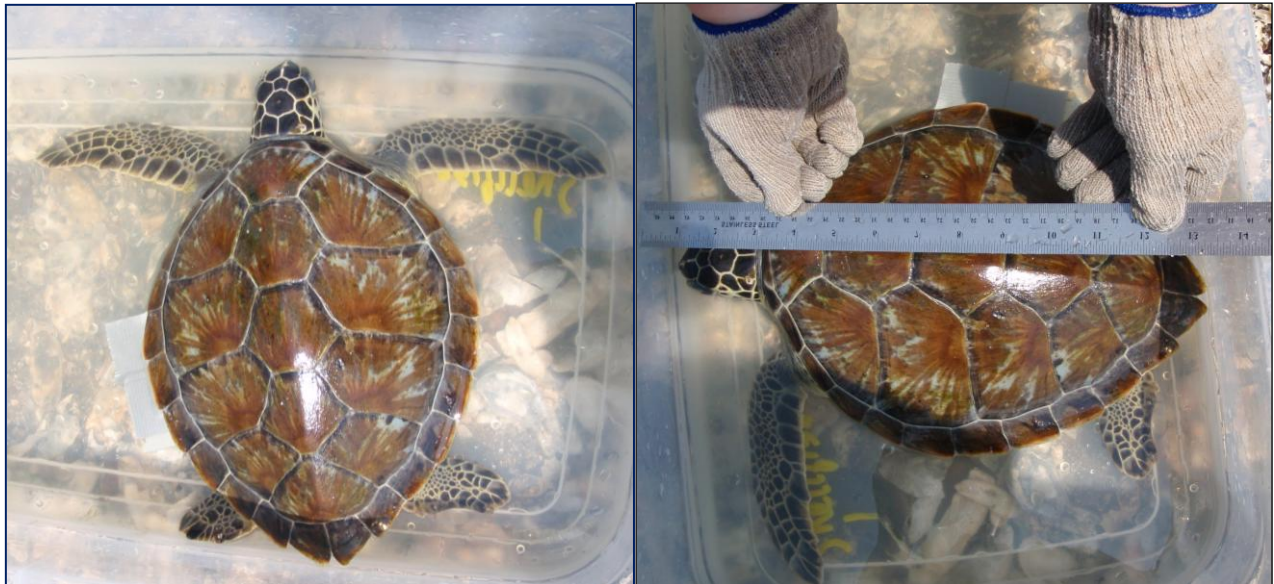




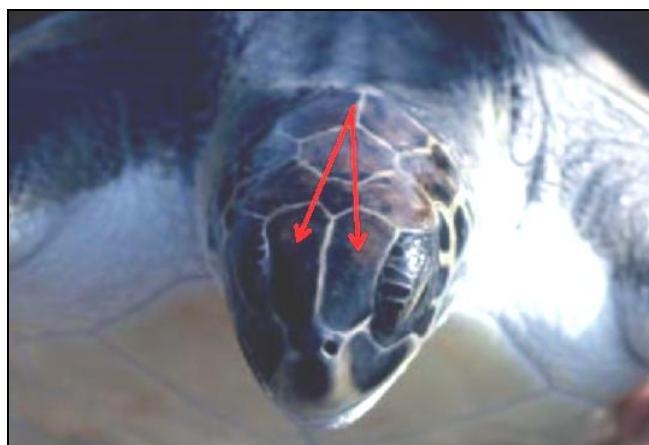
7. Kemp's ridley head showing hook on beak and almond shaped eyes.



8. Green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) carapace with sunburst pattern and showing typical size (10 – 12 inches) seen in South Carolina.



9. Green sea turtle head showing one pair of prefrontal scales.



10. Head of green sea turtle showing the serrated lower jaw.



11. Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) showing its smooth leather skin with ridges.



12. Hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) with overlapping scutes and pointed marginals. There have been no verified strandings of this species in South Carolina.



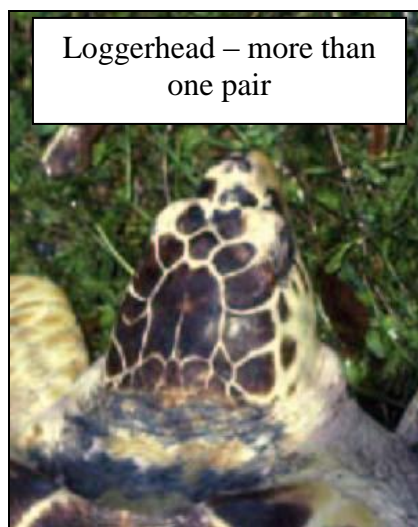


13. Hawksbill head; note pointed beak.



**If you cannot determine the species, salvage the skull and/or the endoplastron bone (equivalent of a breast bone) and bring into our office.**

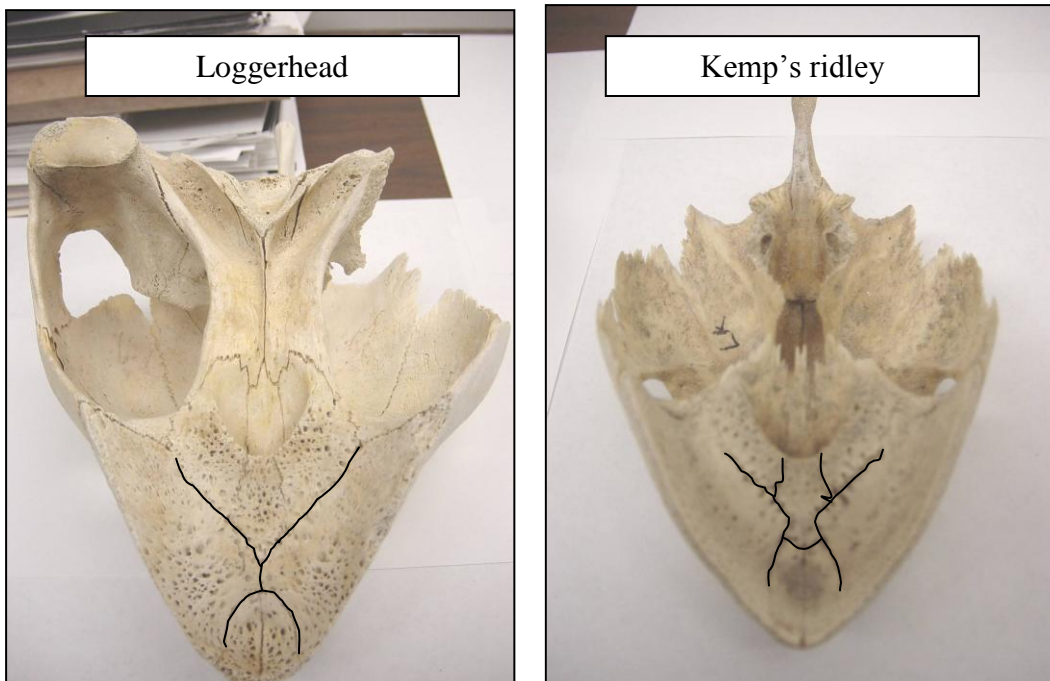
14. Loggerhead and green sea turtle head shots for comparison of prefrontal scales.



15. Comparison of skulls from four sea turtle species, juvenile Kemp's ridley, juvenile green, adult loggerhead and adult leatherback (left to right).



16. Comparison of Loggerhead and Kemp's ridley maxillary bones in the skull. Notice that they touch on the loggerhead and are separated by a smaller bone on the Kemp's ridley.



17. Green sea turtle skull is distinct in that it has nearly vertical premaxillae and has strong ridges in the roof of the skull parallel to the outer edge of the upper jaw.

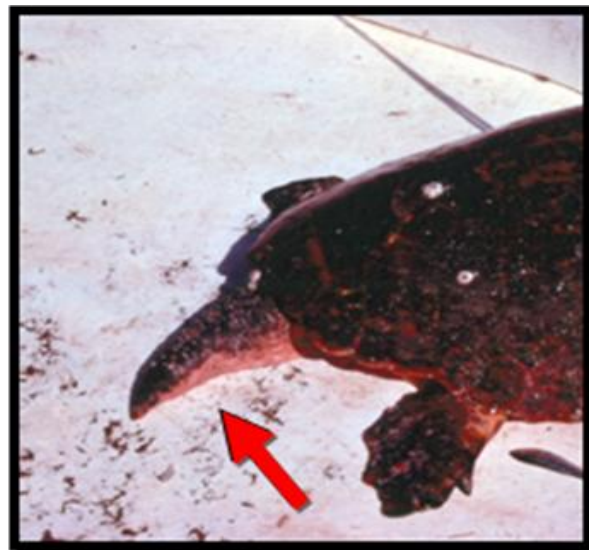


18. Comparison of endoplastron bones in the loggerhead, Kemp's ridley and green sea turtles (from left to right).



**Male or Female?**

19. Adult male loggerhead showing elongate tail.



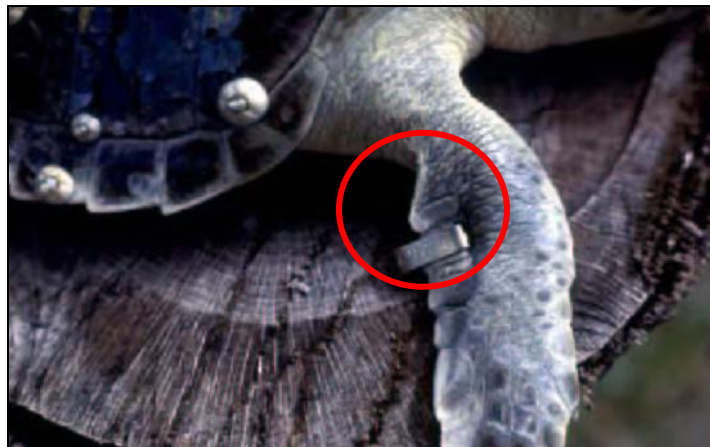


20. Loggerhead showing short tail length of juvenile or female.

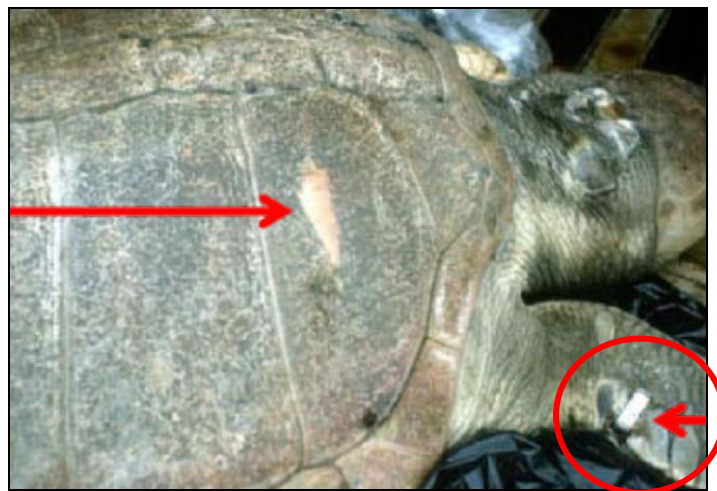


### Types of Tags

21. Kemp's ridley with flipper tag.



22. Kemp's ridley with a living tag in second right lateral scute and flipper tag in front right flipper.



23. Loggerhead with flipper tag. SCDNR In-Water Study



23. Leatherback with tag located in between left rear flipper and tail.





## Measuring a Turtle

24. Measuring over the curve from the center of the nuchal notch beginning at edge of skin; Curved length (maximum notch to tip) is measured over the curve to the longest tip on either side of the posterior notch on this adult male loggerhead. Curved length (minimum notch to notch) is from the nuchal notch to the apex of the posterior notch.



25. Measuring curved carapace length loggerhead and carapace width of Kemp's ridley.





## Injuries and Disease

26. Shark bites on loggerheads.



27. Loggerhead with boat propeller wounds.



28. Emaciated loggerhead; note visible neck muscle.





29. Loggerhead "Barnacle Bill"; note emaciated state and heavy barnacle load.



30. Loggerhead entangled in fishing line. Always mail entanglement material to SCDNR.



31. Green sea turtle and loggerhead killed by dredge (left to right).

